



fact sheet



First Steps

**Indiana's Early Intervention System
for Infants, Toddlers and their Families**

What is the Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC)?

Indiana's Interagency Coordinating Council on Infants and Toddlers (ICC), which was first convened in 1987, is appointed by the Governor to advise and assist Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA), the Lead Agency, in its responsibilities. Comprised of members representing parents of children with special needs, state agency groups, early intervention service providers, legislators, pre-service professionals, and others, the ICC is committed to holding the vision of First Steps Early Intervention Services in Indiana and to keeping abreast of issues, concerns, and trends which may affect First Steps in the future.

The ICC utilizes standing committees and task forces, developed around the basic components of early intervention, to identify current issues, gather information, and make informed and supportive recommendations to the Bureau. Family members, early intervention providers, Local Planning and Coordinating Council members and other interested community leaders serve on the committees and task forces of the ICC. With the help of these local representatives, the ICC can assist the Lead Agency in developing an early intervention system of the highest quality, which seeks to balance family-centered services with fiscal responsibility.

What is First Steps?

Indiana's First Steps System is a family-centered, locally-based, coordinated system that provides early intervention services to infants and young children with disabilities or who are developmentally vulnerable.

First Steps brings together families and professionals from education, health, and social service agencies. By coordinating locally available services, First Steps is working to give Indiana's children and their families the widest possible array of early intervention resources.

Families who are eligible to participate in Indiana's First Steps System include children, ages birth to three years, whom:

- ♦ Are experiencing developmental delays;
- Have a diagnosed condition that has a high probability of resulting in developmental delay;

First Steps is administered by the Bureau of Child Development Services within the Division of Disabilities and Rehabilitative Services of Indiana's Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA).

Members of the Indiana Governor's Interagency Coordinating Council on Infants and Toddlers

Rob Morgan,
Acting Council Chairperson, Parent, New Palestine
Lori Crossley,
Vice-Chair, Parent, Bloomington

Parents

Three Open

Early Intervention Providers

Darlene Kardatzke, M.D.,
Riley Hospital for Children, Indianapolis
Jackie Garritano, 1st Kids, Crown Point
Karen Tyner, Turnstone Center, Fort Wayne
Ginger Whitler, Occupational Therapist, Evansville

State Agency Representatives

Dawn Downer, (Part C Coordinator),
FSSA, Services, Bureau of Child Development
Sheron Cochran,
Department of Education, Division of Exceptional Learners
Phyllis Kikendall, FSSA,
Department of Child Services, Program & Prevention Services
Judy Ganser, M.D., MPH, Maternal Child
Health Services, Indiana State Department of Health
Cheryl Shearer, FSSA,
Division of Mental Health
Paul Hyslop, Department of Insurance
Lora Miller, FSSA,
Division of Disabilities and Rehabilitative Services
Open, FSSA,
Office of Medicaid Policy & Planning
Christina Endres, Department of Education,
Education for Homeless Children & Youth
Johnene Presley-Wheat, FSSA,
Foster Care, Department of Children Services

Personnel Preparation

Azar Hadadian, Ph.D., Muncie

Legislators

Jackie Walorski, State Representative, Lakeville

Child Care

Open

Head Start

Susan Lightle, Indiana Head Start

What is the role of the First Steps Local Planning and Coordinating Councils (LPCCs)?

Thanks to having LPCCs in every one of the nine clusters, our state is making successful progress toward bringing together federal, state, local, and private funding sources to develop a coordinated, community-based, family-centered system of services. Each cluster's LPCC provides the authentic voice for early intervention services at the local level by identifying concerns, issues, and strengths unique to each community and then crafting a service delivery system that meets those locally identified needs.



Our Mission:

The ICC mission is to advise and assist the lead agency to assure that Indiana families with infants and toddlers experiencing developmental delays or disabilities have access to early intervention services close to home and in their community when they need them. This is accomplished through the implementation of a comprehensive, coordinated statewide system of System Points of Entry and Local Planning & Coordinating Councils providing early intervention services called First Steps.

Our Vision:

Our goal is to serve infants and toddlers with special developmental needs or with a diagnosis putting them at a high probability of having special developmental needs by providing a family-centered, comprehensive, coordinated, neighborhood-based system of services for them and their families. To this end, we:

- ◆ Involve families in the development, implementation, and evaluation of the statewide early intervention service system.
- ◆ Work with families to give children “peer-bound” experience. Peer-bound children are happy, have friends, go to school, and are active and accepted members of their community.
- ◆ Make services accessible and widely dispersed throughout the community.
- ◆ Offer choices to families that are typical of the choices available to all families of young children in their everyday routines, settings, and activities.
- ◆ Offer services that are culturally sensitive and tailored to individual needs of the child as well as family priorities.
- ◆ Offer services that exemplify best practices in early intervention and remain accountable for the quality of these services by evaluating them in terms of process and outcome.
- ◆ Respect families by acknowledging that they are the primary constant in the child's life and by helping them to make choices as well as supporting them as they implement those choices.
- ◆ Promote lifespan empowerment by enabling parents and caregivers to effectively advocate for their children while in First Steps and beyond in order to maximize potential.
- ◆ Creatively use existing resources and seek additional resources to maximize service options for families and to fairly compensate staff providing services.

